

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN FEED CONTROL OFFICIALS, INC.

6669 '99 SEP 29 P2:08

September 21, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Docket No. 99N-1591

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), an association with membership consisting in large part of state feed control officials, the lead state people responsible for the administration and enforcement of state laws, regulations, and parts of the Food Drug and Cosmetic Act pertaining to the distribution of commercial feed to animals being fed for food production and pets, we submit these comments to the Proposed rule to implement the Veterinary Feed Directive in accordance with the Animal Drug Availability Act.

In the Summary of the Proposed rule, in the section stated as II. Discussion of the Proposed Rule, it is indicated that the Agency is seeking comment on the policy reflected in the proposed rule allowing only facsimile transmission of VFD's and whether that policy should be changed to allow use of the telephone and e-mail for transmitting VFD orders. It is our position that we would object to the extension of the stated policy to allow use of the telephone for transmitting VFD orders.

We believe that to allow for the use of the telephone to transmit VFD orders greatly enhances the possibility of errors being made in production and distribution of medicated feed containing VFD drugs. The Proposed rule stipulates the required information that must be submitted as part of the VFD. This information is required to make the VFD a valid, informative, and meaningful document. It occurs to us that it would be necessary for an individual obtaining this information via phone to be very attentive and attuned to the VFD process and the use of feed medications to correctly understand and record the required information. In an average feed manufacturing establishment setting in the United States it is very unlikely that a veterinarian calling in a VFD will make phone contact with a person that will be in a position to capture the required information in an

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accurate manner. The person contacted may very well be the mixing operations person who at the time of the call is in the mill mixing feed, will be in a noisy environment, and perhaps will not have anything more to write on than a scratch pad of paper. The possibility of capturing accurate information via telephone is severely hampered by normal operations in a feed mill setting as well as by the training level achieved by many employees at these facilities.

In addition, what verification factor would be utilized to determine the authenticity of the caller? Would a medicated feed manufacturing establishment be allowed to, or manufacture a feed based on a phone call prior to receiving a facsimile verification of the actual VFD submission? What advantage would a feed manufacturer gain in time or production if a VFD was allowed to be submitted via telephone? It would appear that most conscientious feed manufacturers would not produce a VFD containing feed until such time that they have in hand all the information that is required by this regulation. Therefore, there is no real need to allow for the submission of a VFD via telephone.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments and trust that our comments will be reviewed and considered as part of the docket.

Sincerely,

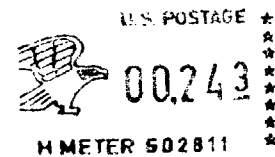
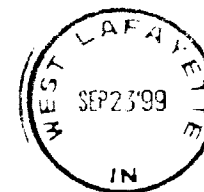
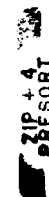
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan R. Hanks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alan" being the most prominent.

Dr. Alan R. Hanks, President
Association of American Feed Control Officials

cc: AAFCO Board of Directors


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